



Santa Cruz County Commission on Justice and Gender

701 Ocean St
Santa Cruz, CA 95060
831-454-3400 (TTY/TDD: 711)
JAG@santacruzcounty.us

Notice of Public Meeting and Agenda

Date: Thursday, August 24, 2023
Time: 12:00 pm – 1:30 pm
Location: Community Health Trust of Pajaro Valley at 85 Nielson Street, Watsonville, CA 95076

1. Roll Call – 12:00
 - 1.1. Present – Eryn Simpson, Celeste Gutierrez, Tara George, Amanda Geipe, Sheryl Norteye, Jen Herrera, Sarah Kocjan, Rebecca Garcia, Leeann Luna, Lynne Petrovich
 - 1.2. Absent – Sarah Fletcher, Julie Macecevic, Sarah Schumacher, Kristie Clemens
2. Agenda Review
 - 2.1. No changes to agenda
 - 2.2. Motion Norteye, Second Luna, Approval unanimous
3. Administration of Oaths of Office
 - 3.1. Administered at 12:09
4. Announcements
 - 4.1. UCSC – Michele Daniel Jones in October – History of women’s prison in Indiana
 - 4.2. Safe Release Program – 1/1/23 to date – Motel dates for 29 women for 73 nights. Since beginning of the program 156 nights in motels. Wraparound services for those who want additional support. No need to be a survivor to be eligible for a motel night.
 - 4.3. Countywide Equity statement
 - 4.4. WRRP recognized as a national mentor site (RSEP?). 1 of 5 in California, only one focused on women. Friends Outside, New life, Janus. 10/2 – 10/3 host folks national and have a training.

5. Public Comment

Any person may address the Commission for a period not to exceed 3 minutes on matters within the jurisdiction of the Commission.

Stacey Palau – Celebrating 50 years of providing services with New Life. Friday, September 8th, hosting a reception to thank partners over the last 50 years. Invitation for all commissioners. Program starting at 3:45.

6. Approval of Minutes (Action)

6.1. Motion – Kocjan; Second – George,

6.2. Approved unanimously

7. Presentation and discussion on Housing for Justice-involved Women

7.1. Kelly: Speaking from Experience

7.2. Human Services: Data and Housing

8. Adjournment

8.1. Motion by Eryn Simpson at 1:32

The next scheduled regular meeting is on Thursday, November 16, 2023.

The County of Santa Cruz does not discriminate on the basis of disability, and no person shall, by reason of a disability, be denied the benefits of its services, programs or activities. If you wish to attend this meeting and require special assistance to participate, please call 831-454-3400 (TTY/TDD: 711) at least 72 hours in advance to make arrangements.

Why We Gather

- ❖ We gather because we know the overwhelming majority of women in custody are survivors, and we hear their pain.
- ❖ We gather because poor people and people of color are over-represented in our jails.
- ❖ We gather because we bear witness to the ongoing oppression of women entangled in the criminal legal system.
- ❖ We gather because we see the cycles of pain and punishment being inflicted on children of incarcerated parents.
- ❖ We gather because our system of punishment does not help people heal.
- ❖ We gather because taxpayer money is spent punishing disproportionately poor people, many suffering mental illnesses, costing in dollars and lives and further threatening public safety.
- ❖ We gather because we are committed to doing less harm.

Why Gender Matters?

- ✓ More severe histories of sexual/physical abuse
- ✓ Higher prevalence of mental and physical health problems, including trauma related to abuse
- ✓ More likely to be convicted of a nonviolent offense
- ✓ More likely to have children
- ✓ Different education and employment histories and opportunities
- ✓ Respond differently to treatment and correctional supervision and less likely to reoffend

Advisory Task Force on Justice and Gender

Goal: Reduce recidivism and help break intergenerational cycles of incarceration.

Mission: Improve health and justice outcomes for justice involved women and their children by identifying and addressing unique needs of women and their families at each stage of the justice system.

Commission on Justice & Gender

Purpose: to identify and address issues related to women and girls directly impacted by the criminal justice system and/or gender-based violence, including:

- trauma caused by domestic violence, sexual assault, human trafficking
- separation from children
- lack of housing
- and sexual abuse in custody

and make recommendations to the Board of Supervisors in an effort to reduce harm to women and their families and end intergenerational incarceration.

[Ord. 5353 § 1, 2020; Ord. 5329 § 2, 2020]

“Nothing about us without us.”

Include representatives with lived experience in planning, decision-making, and trainings, and ensure they are paid for their time.



COUNTY OF SANTA CRUZ
HUMAN
SERVICES
DEPARTMENT

Human Services: Data & Housing

Presented by:

Amanda Geipe, *Director of Planning & Evaluation*

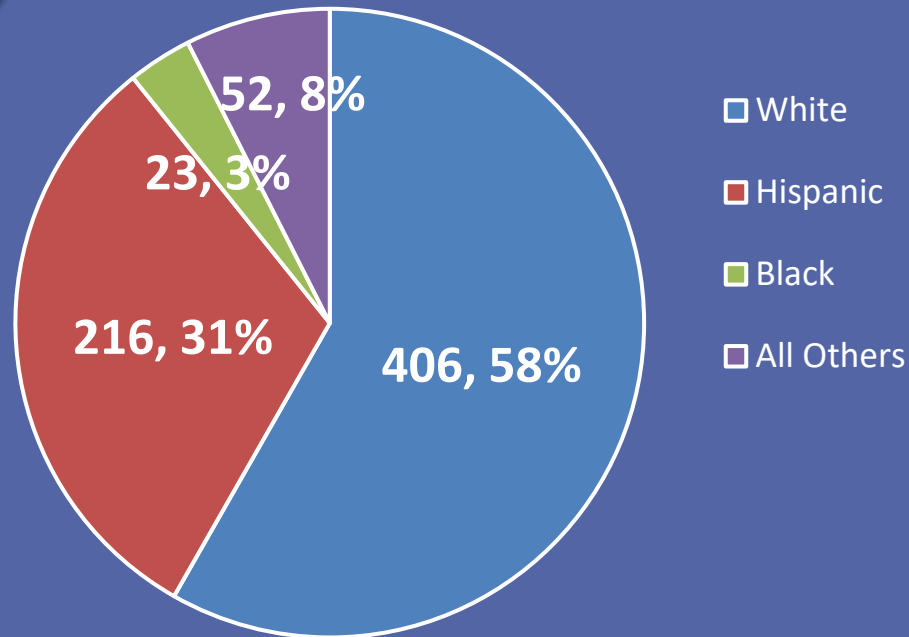
Dr. Robert Ratner, *Director of Housing for Health*

Alex Dami, *Senior Analyst with Housing for Health*

SANTA CRUZ COUNTY JAIL

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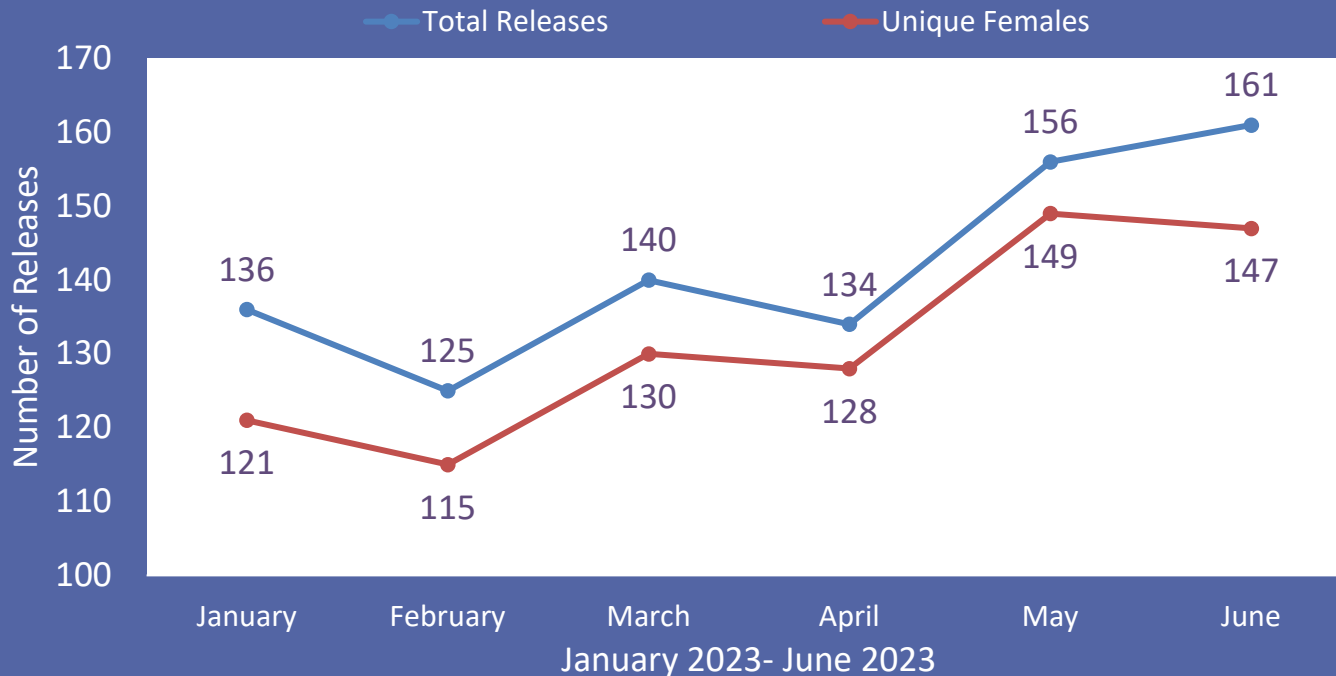
Women were incarcerated
From January 2023- June 2023



Incarceration Data

In 2023, from January to July, women spent an average of 19 days in jail.

Women Released from Jail



HSD Data on Jail Releases

- 78 women (11%), are current or previous children or mothers in the child welfare system.
- 152 women (22%), have been in the HMIS system.
- 321 women (46%), received Medi-Cal at some point.
- Hispanic females had the highest rates of currently or previously receiving Medi-Cal, CalFresh, or CalWORKS
- Females age 30-39 had the highest rates of currently or previously receiving Medi-Cal, CalFresh, and HMIS.

Jail Data

Point in time information*:

- 25 women were receiving prescription medication
- 4 women were waiting for a bed in state hospital
- 21 women were considered pre-trial to the Sheriff's Office. *This data was not received by Probation.*

*There were 25 women in custody at both Blaine Street and Main Jail for this count.

Safe & Supportive Housing Quotes

From 16 Interviews with Women in Main Jail 2022

“When I get out of here I don’t have nowhere to touch down so I end up turning to crime cuz I don’t have any money.”

“I have a home, I haven’t been able to pay rent, worried about losing my home and becoming homeless. I had a cat, a dog, a baby, a life; I feel like I’ve been kidnapped. “

“Trying to find housing here is really hard, and not a lot of women-only options for women who are not in custody of children. But even when I had my daughter it was hard. And with a felony the options are even less.”

“Who doesn’t want to live in an environment where they’re healthy and safe? Who doesn’t want to get better? “

2023 Point in Time Count of Persons Experiencing Homelessness

- 1,804 persons – lowest ever in Santa Cruz County
- Reductions in all jurisdictions except Watsonville (15% increase)
- Highest percentage of Hispanic/Latinx ever – 44%
- Highest percentage of unsheltered sleeping in vehicles ever – 46%
- 1 of 4 spend at least one night in a criminal justice institution within the last 12 months
- 31% women, 1% transgender/gender non-conforming
- Currently experiencing domestic/partner violence – 6%
- History of domestic/partner violence – 34%

Gender-Specific Housing

- Generally prohibited by federal and state law – applies to all types of housing
- From Corporation for Supportive Housing “Between the Lines” guide to legal issues in supportive housing – *“Under both federal and state law, housing providers cannot discriminate on the basis of sex (gender)...gender is a protected classification and courts would most likely find any restriction based on gender unlawful.”*
- HUD has issued specific guidance to prevent discrimination against teenage boys, transgender and gender non-conforming individuals

Re-entry Specific Housing

- “Restricting a project to former prisoners should be permissible under fair housing law if services are provided that are specially designed to assist this population.”
- Must monitor and justify disparate impact on protected classes as a legitimate business purpose

Violence Against Women Act (VAWA)

- Most federally-funded programs are required to have an emergency transfer policy to support individuals experiencing domestic violence to transfer to a safer housing program or location
- HUD Continuum of Care (CoC) process has recently increased funding availability for DV providers – Monarch and Walnut Ave. received new grants last year

Housing for Health Partnership Coordinated Entry

- No longer using Smart PATH and VI-SPDAT
- Using locally developed housing needs assessment and housing action plan
- Trained Housing for Health Connectors use tools and support individuals with housing problem solving – working to expand network
- Housing queue only for those likely to get referred to a program in next six months – historic data shows 150-200 referrals/year (exceptions – youth, families, vets)
- [Coordinated Entry \(housingforhealthpartnership.org\)](https://housingforhealthpartnership.org)

Permanent Supportive Housing

- Most expensive intervention in the housing services world – long-term subsidies with supportive services as long as needed
- Generally reserved for people with significant health barriers to getting and keeping housing without support with limited potential for significantly increasing their income
- Re-entry permanent supportive housing - [Adult Reentry Grant Program \(ARG\)](#)

Family Unification Program Vouchers



Family Unification Program (FUP) Overview

- Goal: Support families with a Family Children Services case or youth who have received foster care services access safe and stable housing
- Issued by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)
- Partnership between:
 - Housing Authority of the County of Santa Cruz
 - Human Services Department of the County of Santa Cruz
 - Housing for Health Partnership (CoC)
 - Various Housing Agencies/Programs
- Housing Choice Voucher
 - Voucher holders pay around 30% of adjusted monthly income towards rent

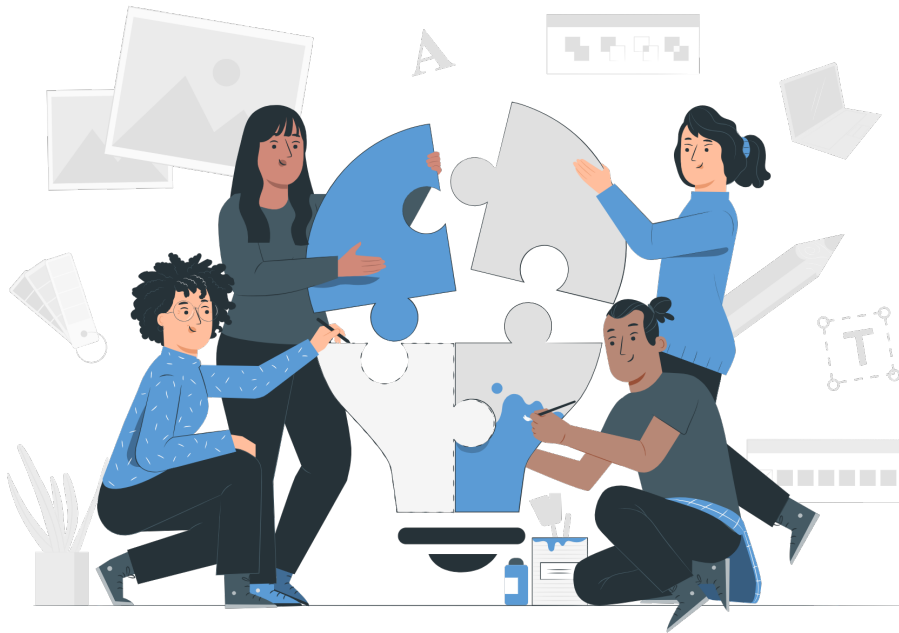


FUP-Youth vs. FUP-Family

	FUP-Youth	FUP-Family
Eligibility	<p>Individuals at least 18 years old and no more than 24 years old who:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Left foster care at age 16 or older or will leave foster care within 90 days • Experiencing homelessness, at risk of homelessness or fleeing domestic violence 	<p>Families whose housing is a primary factor in either:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The imminent placement of the family's child or children in out-of-home care. • The delay in the discharge of the child or children to the family from out-of-home care.
Voucher Time Limitation	3 years with option to extend an additional 2 years	No time limitation
Length of Time Supportive Services Must be Offered	36 months	12 months
Dedicated Housing Programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transitional Age Youth Navigation (TAY Nav) – Community Action Board • Encompass Community Services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bringing Families Home – Housing Matters



FUP Process



#1 Determine if an individual is eligible for a FUP voucher.

#2 Connect individuals with supportive services, as available

#3 Individual applies for a FUP voucher via the Housing Authority.

#4 Once approved, the individual finds a unit and leases up utilizing the FUP voucher.



How can I refer someone?

FUP Youth

Email

[Alexandra.dami@](mailto:Alexandra.dami@Santacruzcounty.us)

[Santacruzcounty.us](mailto:Alexandra.dami@Santacruzcounty.us)

Name & Date of Birth

Coming Soon! FUP-Y
Referral Form

FUP Family

Email

[Alexandra.dami@](mailto:Alexandra.dami@santacruzcounty.us)

[santacruzcounty.us](mailto:Alexandra.dami@santacruzcounty.us)

Name, Date of Birth

Anyone Experiencing Homelessness

Complete a
Connection Services
Request Form at the
Housing for Health
Partnership website





COUNTY OF SANTA CRUZ
HUMAN
SERVICES
DEPARTMENT

Questions?

Next JAG Commission meeting

November 16, 2023

Noon – 1:30 p.m.

Location TBD